

BX

9843

P6F8

Chan.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Chap. BX 9843

Shelf PG F8

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.







SERMON,
CHARGE, RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP,

AND

ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE:

AT THE INSTALLATION

OF

REV. CHARLES LOWE,

AS PASTOR OF THE

NORTH CHURCH IN SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS,

SEPTEMBER 27, 1855.

Published by Request.

SALEM:

PRINTED AT THE OBSERVER OFFICE.

1855.



Free Agency and Moral Inability Reconciled :

A

S E R M O N

PREACHED AT THE INSTALLATION

OF

REV. CHARLES LOWE,

AS PASTOR OF THE

NORTH CHURCH IN SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS,

SEPTEMBER 27, 1855.

BY ANDREW P. PEABODY, D. D.,

PASTOR OF THE SOUTH CHURCH IN PORTSMOUTH, N. H.

Published by Request.

SALEM :

PRINTED AT THE OBSERVER OFFICE.

1855.

A

BX9843
P6F8

To Rev. ANDREW P. PEABODY :

Dear Sir :

THE Proprietors of the North Meeting-House in Salem, feeling under deep obligation to you for the kindness with which you consented to assist in the services at the Installation of Rev. Mr. LOWE as our Pastor, and having been thoroughly impressed with the wisdom, ability and eloquence of your discourse, we beg of you the favor of a copy for publication.

Respectfully,

E. K. LAKEMAN. AUGUSTUS PERRY.
GEO. WHEATLAND. C. FOOTE.
JEREMIAH PAGE.

SALEM, Sept. 28, 1855.

PORTSMOUTH, N. H., Oct. 1, 1855.

Gentlemen :

Your kind appreciation of the Sermon delivered at Rev. Mr. LOWE's Installation is, I fear, beyond the actual merit of the discourse, which has however at least the claim to regard, which an honest and earnest endeavor to elucidate a perplexed subject might confer. I cheerfully comply with your request to furnish a copy for the press.

I am, gentlemen, sincerely yours,

A. P. PEABODY.

MESSRS. E. K. LAKEMAN. AUG. PERRY.
GEO. WHEATLAND. C. FOOTE.
JEREMIAH PAGE.

S E R M O N .

JOHN VI. 44.

NO MAN CAN COME TO ME, EXCEPT THE FATHER WHICH HATH SENT ME
DRAW HIM.

AT first thought this text would seem almost to preclude the need, and to deny the utility of a gospel ministry. Yet in unfolding the sentiment which it conveys, we may find that, while it limits, it guides,—while in some directions it narrows, in others it intensifies and exalts the preacher's functions; and that it attaches the highest sanctity to his office, making it literally what it has been our wont to call it, an embassy from heaven to earth. It represents a sentiment which runs through the whole of the Old and New Testament, namely, man's inability to make himself what he needs and ought to be. Yet but a little while before, Jesus had said, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life," as if the negligence were in the strictest sense voluntary and blameworthy. In correspondence with this text also there are in the Old and New Testament very many others, which imply man's unrestricted ability to be and to do all that God would have him be and do. The Scriptures therefore are chargeable in full with the inconsistency and absurdity of this self-contradiction, if self-contradiction it be. But we may find that these two classes of scriptural declarations only represent opposite poles of human nature as verified by our own experience,—that, if we analyze our con-

sciousness, we shall discern traces both of natural freedom and of moral inability. And we may find too that the Bible stretches the connecting wire from pole to pole, and harmonizes the conflicting principles which it enunciates side by side.

Our superficial consciousness assures us that we are free agents. But how much do we mean by this? Simply, that the executive powers of the mind and body are at the command of the will; that we can, through the force of the will, govern our thoughts, determine our pursuits and regulate our actions; in fine, that, within their own scope and sphere, our wills exercise a sovereignty not unworthy to be compared with that of the Omnipotent will over the universe at large. But the will,—is that free? Can you control its action? Can you arrest its gravitation? Can you bend it even to your convictions of expediency, of right, of duty? Is it not determined by laws and impulses which lie not under your immediate command?

I will suppose a case. There is, I will suppose, in this city, a certain amount of destitution and suffering,—an amount so great that it can be relieved only by the personal effort and sacrifice of all who are in a prosperous condition. Now, in the popular sense of the words, you are all able to make the required effort and sacrifice. But I apprehend that there may be some of you who cannot will to be thus charitable,—some who, in such a case, with a clear conviction of the duty of charity, and with sincere approval of the relief bestowed by others, would give and do nothing or next to nothing, because their wills were crippled by invincible indolence or selfishness.

To take another instance. I will suppose opportunity for the unrestrained indulgence of some vicious appetite placed before all of you in forms that would be tempting to the lower nature of every one of you. I will suppose every motive of

shame removed, every earthly inducement to abstinence withdrawn. In the popular sense of the words, you are all capable of this excess, and would derive temporary pleasure from it. Yet there are some of you, who could not will to indulge in it. There are some of you, in whom moral, Christian principle would be so strong as to constrain your wills—no matter how fierce the temptation—within the laws of purity, temperance and sobriety. Thus, though you are free agents, your wills are not free; for there are things, which you are able to do, yet which you are incapable of willing.

But, you ask, is not happiness the universal aim? And must we not of necessity will what we suppose most directly conducive to our happiness? I answer, No. Among the myriads in Christendom who are daily steeped in foul and enormous guilt, there are thousands, who are conscious of being made perpetually wretched by their guilt,—thousands too, who, believing in the sternest theological dogmas, have no doubt that every step they take in vice and crime is drawing them nearer the brink of eternal perdition. Yet they cannot will to arrest themselves on this ruinous career.

When we assume that man always pursues his highest idea of happiness, we forget his mixed nature. Were we wholly animal beings, the highest animal enjoyment would be our legitimate object, and would furnish the sole motive to our wills; and, though we might sometimes commit a mistake, we could never sin. Were we purely spiritual beings, goodness would be the sole end of our existence, and would alone give impulse to our wills; and in that case also we should be incapable of sinning. But our animal natures have enjoyment for their supreme end; our spiritual natures have goodness for their supreme end; and the two coincide but partially. One must often be sacrificed to the other. The highest animal en-

joyment finds itself circumscribed and checked by the claims of goodness; goodness is interfered with by various tempting forms of animal enjoyment, and by the means of securing such enjoyment in the future. The will is directed toward one or the other of these ends, and is determined, not by the absolutely strongest motive, but by the strongest motive in the direction toward which the will tends. Thus this man's will is determined by the pleasure, or the acquisition subsidiary to pleasure, which lies nearest at hand; that man's, by the opportunity of duty which lies nearest at hand. Neither can possibly will what the other wills, except within the limited space in which pleasure and duty run upon the same track, and even within that space it is simply the nominal and formal, not the actual objects of their volition that are the same. Now these two conditions of the will, considered as habitual, indicate two essentially unlike types of character, designated in the Scriptures as "the carnal mind" and the spiritual mind, or as those "who walk after the flesh" and those "who walk after the spirit;" and those who belong to one of these types are not at this or at any moment capable of assuming the other by a self-constraining resolve or inward act.

Yet characters are changed; wills assume new directions; entire moral transformations are effected. And how are they effected? So far as we can trace their causes, by action from without,—by the action of mind and spirit upon mind and spirit. All great moral changes are effected from without. That such is the case with individuals is rendered probable by the uniform prevalence of this law as regards communities and nations. If individuals could change their own character, they could by their collective manifestation change the character of the bodies politic to which they belong. But this has never yet been done. Civilization is a moral process,—not mere material development, but

the development of those moral faculties and sentiments, which subdue the asperity, refine the grossness and adorn the rudeness of social life ; and it is an axiom among historians that no nation ever civilized itself. Nay, so entirely does history fail to trace the origin of civilization, and, as it gropes in the remotest antiquity, so bewildered is it, not by gathering shadows, but by luminous corruscations as from a primeval paradise, as to attach the highest probability to the theory that the elements of ancient civilization were derived from God and heaven,—the patrimony with which the eternal Father endowed his children in the very infancy of the race. There was before Christ a certain type and measure of civilization, which we can trace back as far as history goes,—which indeed changed its seat, and varied its forms to suit the conditions of soil and climate, but which, there is reason to believe, had attained as high a summit-level in Egypt in the days of Abraham, as that at which it stood in Rome in the age of Julius Cæsar. It was transferred to new localities, when natives of an already civilized country colonized or subjugated a barbarous coast or island, and by familiar communication raised the barbarous inhabitants to their own standard. It deserted its old seats, when barbarians poured in, with overwhelming numbers, on the civilized kingdom drained by emigration, and reduced the native inhabitants to their standard.

Christianity—by direct communication from heaven, and by a Divine impulse that had not spent its supernatural force till a Christian emperor sat upon the throne of the Cæsars—created in the Roman empire a new, and, unlike the ancient, a progressive type of civilization ; and that type has in no instance been adopted or repudiated by a nation or community,—has in no instance grown up or passed away in a nation or community without an organic change in the constituent elements of its population. On the one hand, in some cases emigration or

conquest by a Christian nation has civilized a Pagan nation; and in some cases, as in southern Europe, Pagan invaders, stronger only in arms, but less numerous and with less compactness and vitality than the invaded people, have become incorporated with them, and received the germs of Christian civilization from them. On the other hand, in Asia, once Christian communities have been flooded by the overpowering numbers and the more vigorous life of Mohammedan invaders, and have sunk to their immeasurably lower standard of civilization.

The same principle is constantly verifying itself before our eyes in the formation and the transformation of individual character. Character is formed not by books, nor by conventional standards, nor by public opinion, but by intimate association. The youth, whose lot is cast among the circumspect, honest and pure, seldom parts company with them. On the other hand, all sources of corruption and depravation seem to resolve themselves into the one fountain head of evil influence,—bad company. And, what is peculiarly to the point as regards what I shall have to say hereafter, one cannot determine primarily what character he will form, but he can determine what society he will seek and cherish. Your son may go from you with pure habits, good resolutions, noble aims, yet if he is so circumstanced that his nearest associates are vicious and corrupt, and, if merely to satisfy his social cravings, yet with the intention of shunning their vices, he courts their intimacy, he can no more retain his good habits and fair character, than he can come dry from the ocean, or remain unburned in a burning house. He might have kept aloof from those companions; he has no force of will, which can keep him unharmed if he makes them his intimates.

Character then is formed, is transformed, by influence from without. This is the doctrine of the Bible,—the doctrine of

our text. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." These words simply confirm the results of all experience; bring the ever present spirit of God into the circle of influences upon the human soul; and declare, that, as character is formed and transformed only by action from without, so the highest type of character is created only by action from above,—by the action of God upon the soul of man.

Your will, my friend, I will suppose, has an earthward direction. It seeks gratification, not goodness. Its objects are external, not spiritual. Its aim is outward, not moral attainment. It desires growth in substance, not in character,—the increase of what you have, not the enlargement and exaltation of what you are. You cannot change it, says the Bible, but God can. You cannot change it. If you could, you would have done so before now; for you have had seasons of profound religious impression,—times when you were fully aware of the transcendent worth of spiritual objects,—times of bereavement, suffering or dread, when you have said to yourself, "O that I were a Christian," and when, could you have changed the direction of your will by a momentary inward act, you would have done so. But your thoughts at such seasons have been but as a mere pebble against the stream. At the very moment when they were the strongest, had there been impending some test-duty that demanded effort or sacrifice, your will would have been as lame, as if no such religious impressions had rested upon your soul. What then can you do? You are bidden by the apostle to "work out your own salvation," and he tells you how, when he adds, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." You cannot by an arbitrary inward act change your character; but you can choose your company, and, (if I may, without irreverence, express the sublimest of facts in so familiar a form,) within the

range of your choice is He, in whose hand are the hearts of all men. You may enter into an association, a communion with Him, which will change your character. You may place yourself under influences, which, because they flow from the Omnipotent, are absolutely irresistible.

God has not cut himself off from the communion of his human children; and, as all duty has Him for its object, so can He inspire, create the will to perform all duty. He has reserved for himself in every human soul a shrine which no other being can enter, and from which he utters oracles that sway the will, mould the character, form the life. Of this shrine man holds the key; and the key is prayer. It is at this point that man has power over his own character. It is with this lever that he can turn the golden gate of heaven. Prayer is not mere contemplation, not mere self-excitation; but it has two real parties. It is not alone an efflux, but an influx also; not alone a talking to, but a talking with the Almighty. It is the mode in which the finite spirit may enter into companionship, into mutual relations with the Infinite Spirit. We hear not his words, nor is there need of ours; for the most fervent, effectual prayer often is a groaning that cannot be uttered. But, however offered, if prayer go forth, sincere and earnest, the answer flows in every vein and artery of the spiritual circulation, runs along the whole nervous tissue of the soul, quickens the pulse of conscience, clarifies the inward vision, unseals the ear to the call of duty, and kindles the glowing respiration of a life in its very essence God-born and immortal.

Thus interpreted, our text, so far from disheartening, encourages the aspirant for goodness. Instead of leaving him passive, it tells him where to go, and what to do. "No man cometh to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Go then in prayer to Him, who will draw you Christward and heavenward. Let the voice of your supplication be :

“ Father, I cannot go to Christ, unless thou assume the control of my will, unless my heart be in thy hand to turn it whithersoever it may please thee. Draw thou me then by thine own sovereign love, by the sweetly constraining cords of thy grace, to Christ, to goodness, to holiness, to life eternal.”

I have chosen my subject as having a momentous bearing on the duty of the Christian ministry. The minister who means to be faithful may adopt one of two modes. He may bend his most strenuous effort against specific sins prevalent, social, national, and in the advocacy of the specific measures of reform by which it is sought to put those sins away. Or he may direct his undivided energy to the renewal of individual character,—to the endeavor to awaken the spirit of prayer, to kindle the flame of piety, and thus to lead men to the Father that they may be drawn to Christ. During what little time I may yet occupy, permit me, in the light of the fundamental truth which I have now sought to unfold, to compare these two methods.

I maintain that the first of these methods will prove inefficient even in the attainment of its own end, while that end and every other worthy aim of the gospel ministry can be the most effectually served by the last named method. A minister may appear in the pulpit as an ardent zealot for philanthropic causes of every name. He may fulminate sabbath after sabbath rebukes, denunciations and anathemas. In so doing he may produce excitement, arouse opposition, generate rival factions in his church, and keep the community around him in a perpetual fever. But he will probably effect no essential change in the position or character of a single soul, so long as Calvary is dwarfed by the shadow of Sinai, and the death-cry of redeeming love drowned in the thunders of the violated law. On the other hand, he may be behind the standard of the age as to all

philanthropic movements, and may say much less than it is his right and his duty to say as to the great evils and giant sins of our social and political organization; yet, if he only holds forth the example, the love, the cross of Christ, and labors in his Master's spirit and in the dear love of souls, he may cherish a much higher type of practical piety than he urges, may form much more thoroughly trained Christians than he paints, and may recruit departments of philanthropic service of which he takes no cognizance.

Law of itself is pitifully feeble. It has no power to enforce its own dictates. The will is swayed by the emotional nature; is swayed in the direction of duty only by the breath of prayer and the might of the indwelling God. It is only on the Delectable Mountains of contemplation and devotion that the cloud of the Divine presence rests, and the rain descends to fill the streams that are to make glad the city of our God. But in the utilitarian tendencies of much of the preaching of our times the path up those mountains is left overgrown and inaccessible. The life hidden with Christ in God is ignored. Doing is insisted on more than being. Men are addressed as duty-doing machines, not as living and loving souls. The emotional part of religion, because it is unseen, is undervalued. Prayer, because it is for the Divine ear alone, is made secondary. Gratitude to God, because it does not perform a direct part in the routine of philanthropic effort, is subordinated to hand-work and tongue-work. The incense is scantied in the daily sacrifice; the alabaster box is bartered away for one of earthen ware; and of the ointment of spikenard, fit only for a thank-offering, it is impatiently asked, "To what purpose is this waste?" and demanded that it be "sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor." Yet it is the breath of incense alone, that can disinfect the social atmosphere. It is the alabaster box alone, that can pour an unction from the Holy One on the labors of the

Reformer. It is the will to offer the ointment of spikenard, which alone can make philanthropy availing, or even possible.

It was not without meaning that our Saviour put the first great commandment of the law before the second. It is always first in the order of time. Obedience to it alone can render the keeping of the second possible in any sense that is vital or efficient. Philanthropy must lay one hand on the altar, in order to dispense good gifts with the other hand. The chain, by which men are to be drawn from degradation and guilt, must have its purchase on the throne of God. The minister, who is the agent in leading a single soul to God and thus drawing it to Christ,—in forming a single Christian character worthy of the name,—has added a new force to the philanthropic energy of the community, has created a new centre of beneficent influence, has done effective service to every cause of human progress and well-being. The minister, who makes it his constant, earnest aim to establish the reign of Christ in individual hearts, is the most efficient of all philanthropists. The agents of the great enterprises of reform are indeed doing an important work, but one far less essential than his. They are digging channels for the streams, while he is enlarging, deepening, purifying the fountain. They may justly claim, they ought to have his undisguised sympathy, his earnest Godspeed, his fervent intercession with the Father. But he must not drop his spade to take up theirs. He must not desert his higher post to labor side by side with them; for, though the channels be dug, yet if the fountain is choked and miry, the soil might as well have remained undisturbed.

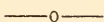
The minister then is not to preach any gospel of to-day, but primarily and chiefly the gospel which is “the same yesterday, to-day and forever.” Men are opposed to reform, because they love the world, and the love of the Father is not in them. They are just such sinners, as Jesus saw before him, when he

cried, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." They need precisely the same treatment they did in the gospel times. They need to come to themselves, and to go to the Father. They need pungent exhibitions of the heinousness and the bitter fruits of sin,—faithful representations of God in Christ reconciling the world to himself. The old footpath from the Valley of Destruction to the Celestial City has not lost its waymarks; the wicket-gate stands where it always stood; and there is no other avenue to holiness and salvation.

I believe, nay more, I know that it is a ministry on this spiritual basis which we are establishing to-day in this ancient church so rich in hallowed memories. Among the choicest reminiscences of my childhood is the benignant countenance of the saintly Abbott,—indeed a disciple whom Jesus loved,—the fragrance of whose piety still lingers in the hearts of all who knew him, and whose name has never ceased to dwell upon your lips as the embodiment of all that you could love in a friend and revere in a Christian. Among the happy omens of this hour, I cannot forget that he whom you now welcome as your spiritual shepherd grew up under the paternal counsel and tender regard of the venerable father of the pastor so early translated from your altar-service,—a father, in whom the self-same cluster of Christian graces, that blossomed in the son's brief pilgrimage, hung with rich, ripe fruit through a green and beautiful old age. I can wish you no greater joy, no higher blessing, than that the promise of this spiritual affinity may be made good. May the benediction of the Most High crown the union this day consummated. May its fruit be for the heavenly harvest and the garner of redeeming love.

CHARGE TO THE PASTOR.

BY REV. JOHN WEISS, OF NEW-BEDFORD.



It seems at first as if I engaged in a formality in undertaking to deliver a charge to one whose good perception of the spiritual office is so well known to me by a close and peculiar intimacy. I have not the benefit of the usual ignorance concerning the candidate which permits one to recommend freely the great, substantial principles that support the pulpit. For, as they occur to me, I recollect that they have already been the objects of your meditation, and I have even profited by your attempts to put them into practice. Let this occasion grant me this very moderate acknowledgement in deference to all that I remember of an union that was severed too abruptly for me and for my people. In delivering this charge I seem to be sharing again your fears and aspirations, and a year of friendship accumulates beneath my words of counsel. We can never feel it is untimely to read those great qualities which filled our Savior's ministry with the spirit of redemption. And the best charge is the recommendation to imitate his methods. Beneath the shadow of his name, words uttered by one mortal to another lose their presumption, and bring into the occasion all that it needs to connect it with eternity and truth.

I charge you to preserve through all the infirmities of the body and the distinctions of the visible life, a conviction that the Savior's spirit is the power of your office and the only hope of this people. Put that idea into permanent possession of your soul. Let it be judge in your conscience, to distinguish the ways of man from the ways of redemption: let it be the visible star by whose bearings you can at every moment regulate your course. Though God may extend around you, like space itself, infinitely on every side, yet, if you tempt those depths, let the eye be guided by that point in heaven where the

Savior appears, and through his light accustom your soul to receive the light of the Father. For though the Father may draw you, the course of this attraction lies through Christ: in him it was first completely accumulated, and the man who earnestly seeks to redeem his soul, will find it true that no man cometh to the Father but by him.

First, I charge you then to imitate the Savior's love of eternal Truth. From this pulpit look over all the inequalities of earth, beyond its smiling and its gloomy tracts, across the barriers which the human mind has raised to mark its own imperfection, through the dust of war and the gloom of oppression, till you can see that which is unchangeably just and true. For your Savior did the same. Not a prejudice, nor a habit, nor a tradition of the earth turned his eye aside: he eagerly penetrated all of them to look upon the perfect ways of God. Not willing to keep his sight within easy range to accommodate it to intermediate objects, he sent it forth trusting to have it filled with the divine proportions. And these he sought to establish upon earth, though they cut across and broke up in confusion every human convenience. If the perfect equity of God seemed to him more lovely than the customs born of man's selfishness and passion, he instantly proclaimed that equity, and urged it against injustice, however dear and venerable. It seemed to him of no consequence that an error or a half-truth was sanctioned: he never once paused to consider that circumstance which seems so imposing to our poor mortality. The beauty of God's kingdom had completely rapt his judgment and his heart—he had no reason left for earth: if men would not believe in what was true, there was no sense in being men, no object in a spiritual capacity. "Ye have heard that it hath been said," sounded utterly contemptible against his word—"but I say unto you."

I charge you to test all your sentiments by the great principles revealed to the Savior in this search for truth. If for instance, you incline to think that the salvation of man depends upon the unobstructed development of those faculties which fall in various degrees to all people by inheritance, remember the doctrine of the New Birth—"that which is born of the flesh is

flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." And teach your people that when they have raised to their maximum the advantages received from their forefathers, they have merely exhausted the impulse of the natural birth: that however amiable the results may be, they have yet to undergo a vital revolution of every motion in their hearts, and to unseal the spiritual faculties which receive impressions from eternity. Teach them that the natural man receiveth not the things of God: they are foolishness to him, because the first birth has its limitations, and the mind itself is a description of them. It is only when the soul also is born invisibly that the man can be redeemed. And again, if you sometimes feel, in your genial intercourse with men, the difficulties which retard the application of any moral principle to life, and are disposed to consider them too favorably, from contagion and human sympathy, remember that these are the difficulties inherent in the natural mind, and that you have been elected to this office to proclaim the doctrines of the spiritual mind. If when the Savior said, "blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness," you find that his understanding admitted any qualifications, admit them also—but not without. If you perceive that he ever shrunk from the unconditional strength of that verse—"all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," then you also may shrink—but not without, if you desire to preach the everlasting Gospel. Apply these principles to every sentiment and emergency; and let their difficulty be a lively illustration to your people that the Second Birth is indeed our great necessity and the object of all preaching.

These doctrines sleep within our Bibles; but if you desire to possess them originally and vitally, to feel them born within you, I charge you to imitate the Savior's reliance upon the Father's spirit. Seek the Father: not only for strength and comfort, not only for the hope which shall make every day lightsome to you, but to connect your soul like a channel with heaven through which loving truth shall flow. Take the impressions you derive from men and books, and carry them directly to the presence of the Father, to be judged, and saved

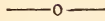
or lost. Believe, with the Savior, that God heareth you always—and that He flows into you, not with vague, emotional impressions, nor with snatches of good cheer, but with the substance of His wisdom, with distinct expressions of His will, with vindications of the Savior's truth. Let the devoutness of the Savior guide your soul into a sweet companionship with the Holy Spirit.

My friend, how soon the calamities and sorrows of this people will begin to make their appeal to you. Your search for truth will be interrupted by the breaking heart that feels nature and reason desert it, terrified at its pain. Human tears will stream more freely at your coming—human voices will ask you for immortality, for the relief of heaven: even those who refuse to be comforted will yet yearn to have you plant a flower in the midst of their desolation. Then let the graves which must hereafter belong to your people, lift you above them to teach them, that your faith may triumph on the spot of their sorrow, and that the dawn of God's comfort may be visible upon your heart. You remember how often we conversed upon that office of consolation which death counsels us to assume, and it appeared to us impossible to send one ray of light into the darkened chamber, unless the lips spake, with irresistible conviction and the smile of our whole sincerity, the name of God. Let me renew the sense of those reflections. I charge you to interrupt their sorrow with the name of the living God; to bring a consciousness of His presence into their dwellings; to fill the vacancy with that Person, whose hand touches more potently than death, whose invisible whisper sends the truth of immortality through all our veins, searching out our griefs. If it seems to you sufficient to possess the ever-present God, it will seem to them a sufficient consolation. And in all their fortunes, let the attitude of your spirit be such that a sense of a very near and personal Father shall prevail. Pursue the hearts of the timid and inconstant with the name of God.

And now, my friend, with great hopes which the past will amply justify, let me commend you to the service of the Father. You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you and your people free.

RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP.

BY REV. DEXTER CLAPP, OF SALEM.



THERE was no need, My Brother, of any formal and public service to convince you of my own cordial welcome, now that you stand again before the altar and take up once more the Ministry of Christ. I rejoice in your renewed consecration to it. After an interval of rest and travel and study you come back to us, not alienated from your chosen calling but furnished for it by new experience and deeper faith, anxious to enter on its labors, willing to accept its trials.

The church rejoices to see you here and in token of its ready fellowship, I give you this right-hand. I give it to you not merely as an expression of personal feeling but as a symbol of the divine harmony which, through the reconciling power of Christ, is yet to join all men's hearts. If we meet in the high sense of the gospel, our communion is beyond any individual friendship, it is the union of immortal affections, the spirit of Jesus lingering always in the church and now united unto yours.

Through me the church sends you its greeting. Not my church, nor any single ecclesiastical connection, nor a summoned council merely, but the *church* catholic, invisible, undivided, greets you on the threshold of your new ministry. I gladly pledge the great fellowship and take you into the great communion. The days of Theological difference and separation seem drawing to a close. Controversial zeal and practical godliness are regarded as spiritual synonyms no more. Love of the heart takes precedence over belief of the intellect. Religious truths, like the Divine incarnation and human regeneration, are seen to be the central doctrines of Christianity, to lie at the base of all Christian theory and character. In these we are beginning to find the vitality and love by which the souls of men are inspired and attracted

together. Whoever comes into sympathy with these truths is drawn into the brotherhood of the redeemed, into the church of the first-born whose names are written in Heaven.

Because I believe there is this new and vital faith abroad and spreading in our Christian community, and beyond us in the wide world, I venture to greet you to-day with so large a welcome. All the true religion of our city welcomes you here, into the midst of its cares and toils and temptation. It comes up to this house and welcomes all the true religion there is in you.

On so generous a platform of Christian fellowship, I am glad, My Brother, to meet you in this pulpit, to stand up with you at the very beginning of your work; for I mean to stand with you through the changes that shall pass over us both. I mean to stand with you till my work or yours shall here be ended.

Greeting you so hopefully now, I forget none of the peculiar trials that come inevitably to the faithful minister. I would not put them out of sight. I would not keep them off. Your brave Christian heart will never ask to be shielded from them. As they come one by one, you know what to do. You have read the Beatitudes, and followed Christ aside into the garden, and on to the Mount of Crucifixion, you know the weight of the cross, and that sometime in life you will be called to bear it. You have not learned to fear or to shrink, but to pray, and you know that God giveth strength.

Strange therefore as it may seem, I bid you welcome to the *trials* of your lot. They will serve to give steadiness to your steps. They will brace your spirit like the clear frosts of winter. I do not believe that their burden will ever weigh you down; that their chill will ever reach your heart. The world is always wanting new proof that its great exposures and temptations can be resisted and passed without hindering the soul's progress or interrupting its happiness. Trusting that you are strong and believing enough to bear such evidence, to show in your own life that evil can be conquered, that faith in God can make the weakest heart valiant, I welcome you to

the office of the ministry, to the homes where trouble comes, to the minds that are clouded with doubt, to the hearts that are heavy with grief.

Knowing the responsibility that rests on this pulpit and the demand that a cultivated congregation makes upon it, I still welcome you to it. The message of the Divine Gospel is needed here, and I believe that you will bear it. In the simplicity of Christ, I believe that you will preach it, and not with the cunning wisdom of man. You will preach it as the word of authority, and therefore the word of power. You will preach it fearlessly, regardless of the favor or frown of men. Truth that flows out of a pure and believing heart, through sanctified affections, will be sure to win its way, disarm criticism, soften prejudice and redeem the soul.

I welcome you to the pleasant fire-sides of the families now given into your charge, and waiting for your counsel and sympathy. As you go from house to house, I feel that you will show how deeply you have drunk of the Master's spirit, and that you will pass no joy, and no sorrow by.

But, my Brother, you have been welcomed already to this great office of the Ministry, and you know something of its cares and blessings. It is for me simply to bid you welcome into this new field, only another portion of the Master's vineyard. The church of Salem runs back in its history to the first planting of the colony. It is fragrant with memories of Francis Higginson, of Roger Williams and Hugh Peters, and where they sowed, you are called to reap. Sainted names also are on the roll of this particular church, which is given unto your hands to-day. And *Exeter* has sent up before, a young man of holy promise, in all the beauty and purity of early life, to guide and guard this same people. His memorial is written, not only on the tablet of stone, but on fleshly hearts, which will keep it fresh when the marble has crumbled into dust. God grant that the flavor of your piety here, the whole temper of your Ministry, may be like his—like the sainted Abbot's, in all things save its brevity! And may your memorial be written on human hearts that live forever!

ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE.

BY REV. E. S. GANNETT, D. D.

—o—

THE usages of an Ordination or Installation service fasten attention on the person who is inducted into the ministerial office, and one who did not understand the theory of our ecclesiastical institutions might think that the whole design of the service was, to secure from the future minister an intelligent and faithful performance of his work. This, however, should not be its whole design; nor is it according to the genius of our church polity, to give the incumbent of the pulpit a prominence that should throw the congregation to an obscure distance. The legal contract recognized in the solemnities of this occasion is not the only ground on which we may assume that there are two parties equally interested and mutually pledged. The spiritual connection which it is the real purpose of these solemnities to bring into view, is also reciprocal; neither its privileges nor its obligations lying wholly, or chiefly, on one side. There is then a manifest propriety, if a portion of the Installation services be addressed to one of the two parties, that the other party should be the subject of an equally direct address. If the minister should receive congratulation that he has found a field of usefulness and a happy home, why not the people, that they have found a wise teacher and close friend; if he be charged to be faithful to them, why not they to be faithful to him? It would be a strange marriage covenant in which but one of the parties was presumed to have an active interest; why should the ecclesiastical union be regarded as less impartial in its distribution of duties?

Not only the proprieties but the requisitions of this hour seem therefore to be consulted, when we offer you, christian

friends, our congratulations. We who have come hither by your request to speak words of friendly counsel and cordial sympathy to our brother in your hearing, cannot go away without saluting you in his presence. Before him we say that you are a fortunate people, and we rejoice with you in the circumstances which justify that term. We are glad for your sake, that when you were obliged to look around for one who should be a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ to your souls, the Providence that is ever mindful of our wants placed within your view him on whom your choice has fallen; who brings to your service the enthusiasm of early life, chastened, but not chilled, by professional experience, and the discipline of a scholastic youth, ripened by foreign travel, and, what is better yet, a self-consecration rendered only the more sure by the tests at home and abroad to which it has been subjected. We are glad for our own sake, that one in whose integrity of purpose we place entire confidence, while of his various qualifications for the work before him we have ample proof, will be again a fellow-laborer with us, aiding us by his example and animating us by his success. We congratulate you as individuals, as members of this society, and as inhabitants of this city, on the acquisition of such a preacher, pastor and friend, as we now commend to your steadfast regard.

That regard, brethren, you will be called to show in various ways. Yet all that need be said in charging you to be faithful in the relation into which you have voluntarily entered, is suggested by a single word, *co-operation*. You have some independent duties, or rather one, which it falls to you alone to be active; and if I thought you would be neglectful of this duty, I should remind you that self-interest, not less than honor and honesty, is concerned in its fulfilment; for a minister who through the niggardliness or carelessness of his people is left to the anxieties of an inadequate support, is crippled in his intellectual and moral resources. But we need not fear that you will let a want of care in this respect throw embarrassment in the way of a sincere and devoted minister. It is of the concurrence of your efforts with his that I would speak.

To such concurrence a common understanding of the purpose

of the ministry is indispensable; for "how can two walk together, except they be agreed?" If you entertain an unworthy conception of the end which the Christian minister should present to his own mind, your error will be a continual hindrance to his success. He is not a mere guardian of existing institutions, or an official representative of accredited truths. He is not a functionary, who discharges his duty by conducting a routine of established exercises, nor a policeman under the disguise of a clerical title. His work is not simple prevention, nor is it external and superficial. The minister of Christ directs his labor upon the unseen consciousness, and the delicate yet imperishable tissue of character. It is his business to make men what they ought to be, in heart and life, in affection and will. This result he can approach only with their consent; and this consent will not be given so long as they see in him only a priest who publicly offers the sacrifice of worship on their behalf, or brings the solace of religion to their homes when grief calls for something that this world cannot give. Behind your apprehension of the nature of the minister's work, and as determining that apprehension, lies your judgment concerning Christianity itself. If you see in the gospel of God's grace only a device for elevating the present condition of men or for extirpating certain social evils, you will both misconstrue and undervalue, and in the end defeat, our friend's intention towards you. Unless you regard the gospel as a divine agency for quickening and redeeming and sanctifying the interior life, for making every one who shall come under its operation penitent and holy, you can have no true sympathy with him who is set apart for the gospel's sake among you. The very first thing, therefore, which the solemnities of this day demand of you is, that you believe in Christianity as a gift from God for your spiritual renewal and perfection.

Having settled this as the basis of co-operation with your minister, you will be prepared to concur with him in his endeavor to use the divinely bestowed forces of Christianity for your benefit. I will not affront your intelligence by intimating that you may possibly harbour the notion that he alone is entrusted with the care of these forces. No thoughtful person, Pro-

testant or Catholic, can believe that a religious choice or heavenly hope may be wrought out for him by some other action than his own. If your minister should have the energy and zeal of a Paul, he could not with the utmost diligence make you "partakers of Christ"; for the human soul is neither clay that can be moulded, nor iron that can be hammered into shape at another's will. The probability is, not that you will overrate, but that you will hold in too low an estimation, the efficiency of the ministerial office. One direction of thought in our religious societies is towards a skepticism in regard to the value of the clerical functions, and some who assist in supporting the institutions of the Church appear to uphold them rather as ornaments of civilization, than as means of personal advantage. As I understand your action in the present case, you are precluded from offering such an appreciation as a reason for not taking an interest in the future labors of your minister. You are not left free, as consistent and upright men, after having called our brother here, to say to him, by your neglect of his services, that you do not think you need them. You do need them, and disregard of them will be the surest proof you can give of your need. Frail and sinful man needs all the help he can get in fortifying himself against the temptations of the flesh and the world.

You are bound, Christian friends, by your wants, by your position, and by your acts, to an earnest co-operation with your minister in the purposes to which he has devoted himself; a cooperation which you can exhibit first in this house, by your presence,—surely not by your absence,—and by a candid reception of what you shall hear from this pulpit. Come to the "meeting-house." We have dropped this good old New England word, as if we were afraid of the sarcasm it sometimes covers. Come in pleasant weather, and come in dull weather. Be ashamed to stay away for a reason which you would not presume to offer for not going out to your secular business on the next morning. Do not so arrange your bodily indispositions, that the physician shall be your adviser on Sunday, rather than the minister. And when you come hither, come neither to admire nor to criticise, but to open your hearts to

the influences that may disintrall you from the consciousness of sin.

Especially let me remind you of the obligation of a right posture of the soul towards that part of the services of this place, which the hearers (unfortunate term) are apt to consider as claiming only a passive attention from them. It is the minister's office to guide the prayers of the congregation, not to make a prayer in their stead. It is a profane abuse of language for him to say before Almighty God,—“*We* praise thee, *we* thank thee, *we* confess *our* sins and implore forgiveness,” if he be the only worshipper. The people must pray with him, pouring their thoughts and emotions into the channel of his language. Your minister may intercede for you in his closet, but here your souls must rise with his to the throne and the mercy-seat.

In regard to the preaching, brethren, let me caution you against undervaluing it on the one hand, and making unreasonable demands of excellence on the other. It is thought by many persons, that the multiplication of books and the introduction of popular lectures have stripped the pulpit of a part of its former importance. But I believe that the pulpit was never more needed than now,—needed to fill a place which literature and the entertainment or instruction of the Lyceum show themselves unable to supply. It was never more necessary that the sermon should exert an influence, and have a character, of its own. If there be danger that the people will be satisfied with what they may get elsewhere, it is more than ever important that they should receive direct religious instruction. To discard the sermon now, when society is full of other agencies and men's minds are solicited by various excitement, is like neglecting both rudder and compass, when the ship has all her sails spread with a stiff breeze and a rough sea.

Yet it should not be forgotten that the sermon is a human production, and therefore may be expected to partake of the imperfection of its author. To complain that a minister does not give each week a discourse with which no one can find fault, is utterly unreasonable. That he should ever produce

such a work might more justly awaken astonishment. No sermon can suit every one's taste, or meet every one's exigency, or express a coincidence with every one's opinion. Preaching that pleased every one would be likely to do no one much good. Old George Herbert's doctrine may require some qualification, but there is substantial justice in what he says, when, after describing the discourses of the pulpit as viands of different kinds which the preacher sets before his hearers, he deprecates the indulgence of a fastidious appetite, and expresses his own purpose to receive whatever may be offered him.

“ Here will I wait then, till I see
 The steward reaching out a mess for me—
 Resolve I'll take it thankfully,
 Whate'er it be, and feed on't heartily.
 Although no Benjamin's choice mess,
 Five times as much as others, but far less;
 Yea, if 't be but a basket full of crumbs,
 I'll bless the hand from which, by which, it comes.”

“ So that the meat be wholesome, though
 The sauce shall not be toothsome, I'll not go
 Empty away, and starve my soul,
 To feed my foolish fancy; but control
 My appetite to dainty things,
 Which oft, instead of strength, diseases brings.”

You have requested our friend to become your pastor as well as your preacher. A pastor is a shepherd. It is a shepherd's business to provide food and shelter for his flock, and especially, if any one of them wander off, to go after it and bring it back. *Oversight* is his peculiar duty. When Paul parted from the elders of the Ephesian church, he charged them “to take heed to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit had made them overseers,” and Peter, writing to the believers in Asia, exhorts the elders among them, “to feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof.” Do not then be offended if your minister looks after you. It is what he ought to do. Let him have free access to your homes, and to your minds. Hide not from him your religious doubts and fears, your

spiritual perplexities and wants; but encourage him to approach you with the question that may probe, as well as with the sympathy that may relieve your distress. Unless I mistake the habits that prevail among us, there is not only much less of religious conversation than there should be in our families and in general society, but also between the minister and his people. It is not right to lay the blame on him, if they never introduce such conversation themselves, and when he makes the attempt, refuse to bear their part. He may preach or lecture in their dwellings, but so long as they maintain a respectful silence, there can be no *conversation*.

While we entreat you to welcome the pastoral visits of your minister, we counsel you not to run into the extreme of making improper demands on his time. Leave to him the distribution of his hours; and if he should appropriate a large part of the day to study, instead of imagining that he neglects you, take this as a proof of his desire to bring to your houses a well-furnished mind, and to your pulpit carefully prepared discourses. Let him study. He is not a piece of mechanism that needs only to be wound up once a week, nor a prophet whose words flow out of the fulness of his inspiration; but a man, who must think much and read much, if he would meet the requisitions on the ministry at the present day. Do not attempt to control his personal habits, nor be curious about his domestic arrangements. Do not pet him, and do not worry him; it would be hard to say, which is the worse treatment of the two for a minister to receive from his people. By the one course you may kill him, and by the other you may spoil him; but by neither will you make him an able expounder of Divine truth. *That* he must become by his own effort, by self-discipline, by study and by prayer.

Once more, there is an indirect co-operation with your pastor and teacher, which for his sake and for your own you ought not to neglect. The evidence he may have of his usefulness among you must be drawn from your personal histories. Those histories will be such as shall satisfy him of the value of his influence over you, only when the purpose and endeavor of your souls take hold on Christian excellence. In this way alone can

you reward his labors on your behalf, or secure your own highest good. You must be spiritually minded believers, showing your faith by your works. I may crave your indulgence for but one remark in illustration of this branch of your duty.

The times in which we live are marked by two characteristics which, while they increase both the importance and the difficulty of the Christian ministry, make it more imperative than ever upon each member of the community that he work out his own salvation with a strenuous solicitude. These characteristics are seen in the instability and the excitement to which no one can be blind. Fickleness and force are strangely combined in the aspect of the period. Men change their opinions and their pursuits, their residences and their connections, political, social and religious, almost as easily as they change their dress. That counsel of the apostle, in which he exhorts the Corinthian Christians to be "steadfast, immoveable," has gone into disrepute; and the consequence is, that the Christian world of our day "abounds" less than it might "in the work of the Lord." At the same time the people are exposed to influences that stimulate their powers to an unhealthy degree, and keep their minds in a state of high tension. The progress of science, new inventions in the arts, increased facilities of communication, and discoveries of inexhaustible mineral wealth, are causing an unparalleled development of human energies. But not in the direction of spiritual perfection. The tendency, the temper, the circumstances of the time, are not such as make men holy. An intense worldliness is becoming, has become the atmosphere which is breathed from the cradle to the grave. The institutions of the country make this effect most perceptible and most fearful here,—in every part of our land, but chiefly in the cities which lie upon the seaboard or on the great lines of our internal commerce. Is it not harder to be heavenly minded or thoroughly Christian under such circumstances, than it was in the last generation? Yet it is just as necessary that men should be followers of Christ now, as then. It is just as true now as it was in the Apostles' day, that "without holiness no one shall see the Lord." Well then—and this is what I would urge—we need the Christian ministry and

the religious institutions which the fathers have left us, and, above all, personal sanctification through obedience to the truth, as much, nay more than they were ever needed by any people on this earth. We, in this age of progress, and in this land whose prosperity out-travels the calculation of the most sanguine, we need the Bible and the Gospel, the church and the Christian sabbath, the altar and the closet, the cross of the Redeemer and the vision of immortality. Alas for the people of this Republic, if they let go their hold on "the things which concern their everlasting peace"! Duty or destruction, heaven or hell, is the alternative before every one of us. Death or life,—choose ye amidst the solemnities of this day which you will take; make the right choice, and if you care for your country or for your own well-being, abide by that choice, cost what it may—wealth, ease, success, any thing and every thing but character and hope—cost what it may, abide by the choice.

Christian friends, if there be a place in all our fair land, ay in all our world, where Christian institutions should be rightly understood and faithfully used, this is the place;—this city, where the gospel of Christ imprinted almost its first foot-step on our shores,—this house, where for generations the worship of God through Jesus Christ has been maintained by men of culture and of faith, by the thronging presence which has filled these seats, by the children who while they departed from the symbolic language of their fathers, clung to the methods of spiritual improvement which their fathers had transmitted. May these walls always enclose a devout and earnest congregation, and he who now stands in this pulpit rejoice in the proof which their cooperation shall give, that he is not spending his strength on inaccessible minds or world-hardened hearts. God bless the union this day consecrated by holy prayer and Christian counsel! In his good providence, may it long continue, and in the experiences of another life may they who shall have labored together here find a common recompense of glory!

ORDER OF SERVICES

AT THE INSTALLATION OF REV. CHARLES LOWE, AS PASTOR
OF THE NORTH CHURCH AND SOCIETY IN SALEM.

September 27, 1855.

—o—

I. ANTHEM. — “I will praise Thee.”

II. INVOCATION AND SELECTIONS FROM SCRIPTURE. — Rev. James W.
Thompson, D. D.

III. HYMN. — (Selected.)

1.

LIFT aloud the voice of praise!
God, our Father and our Friend;
Hear the prayer and song we raise,
Weak, yet trusting, we would bend.

2.

Lo! another servant brought
To the heritage of God;—
May he teach as Christ hath taught,
Tread the path his Saviour trod.

3.

To the vineyard may he come,
Girded with celestial might;
Skilled to draw thy children home,
Taught to give the darkened light.

4.

Unto Thee a people bend,—
Bind us heart to heart in love;
Flock and pastor, we would tend
Ever toward our home above.

IV. SERMON. — Rev. A. P. Peabody, D. D.

V. PRAYER OF INSTALLATION. — Rev. Calvin Lincoln.

VI. ORIGINAL HYMN. — By Rev. Charles T. Brooks.

1.

GREAT GOD! within these temple gates
 To-day a reverent people waits
 To hear Thy voice, to see Thy face,
 And feel Thine all-enlivening grace.

2.

For here, of old, Thy name was named,
 Thy truth, of old, was here proclaimed,
 Here swelled the song of praise and trust
 From lips now mouldering in the dust.

3.

What sainted forms, this hour draw near,
 To calm, to strengthen and to cheer!
 Their words of counsel and of prayer
 Still haunt the hushed and hallowed air.

4.

Where once they stood, Thy servant stands
 With girded loins and waiting hands;
 O, give him strength, Almighty Lord!
 To do Thy will and speak Thy word.

5.

Give him the burning love of truth
 And wisdom's ever-blooming youth;
 The tender heart, the faithful tongue,
 The quickening word for old and young.

6.

Lord! on this ancient church of Thine
 Still let Thy face benignant shine,
 And more and more, as years roll by,
 May souls be ripening for the sky!

VII. CHARGE TO THE PASTOR. — Rev. John Weiss.

VIII. RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP. — Rev. Dexter Clapp.

IX. MUSIC. — "Oh how lovely is Zion.

X. ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE. — Rev. E. S. Gannett, D. D.

XI. PRAYER. — Rev. George W. Briggs, D. D.

XII. MUSIC. — Sanctus and Hozanna.

XIII. BENEDICTION. — By the Pastor.

MINISTERS OF THE NORTH SOCIETY IN SALEM,

From 1773 to 1855.

—o—

The *First Pastor* was Rev. THOMAS BARNARD, D. D. Ordained January 13, 1773. Died October 1, 1814, aged 67 years.

Second. Rev. JOHN EMERY ABBOTT. Ordained April 20, 1815. Sermon by Rev. Wm. E. Channing, of Boston. Mr. Abbott died at Exeter, N. H., November 14, 1820, aged 26 years.

Third. Rev. JOHN BRAZER, D. D. Ordained November 14, 1820. Sermon by Rev. Dr. Kirkland, President of Harvard University. Dr. Brazer died at Charleston, S. C., February 27, 1846.

Fourth. Rev. OCTAVIUS B. FROTHINGHAM. Ordained March 10, 1847. Sermon by his father, Rev. Dr. Frothingham, of Boston. Mr. Frothingham resigned April 30, 1855.

Fifth. Rev. CHARLES LOWE. Installed September 27, 1855. Sermon by Rev. A. P. Peabody, D. D., of Portsmouth, N. H.

—

The North Church was formed from the First Church in 1772, and a new Meeting House erected the same year,—which was occupied by the Society till 1835, when they built a new stone Church on Essex Street, which was dedicated June 22, 1836. Sermon on the occasion by Rev. Dr. Brazer, the pastor.





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 021 897 930 0